

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, or claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A process for dewatering a slurry of hydrophilic particulate material comprising:

initially hydrophobizing said material using a surfactant of HLB number greater than or equal to 15;

adding a nonionic surfactant of HLB number less than 15 dissolved in at least one organic solvent;

agitating said slurry to allow for said nonionic surfactant to adsorb on the surface of said initially hydrophobized material so that its hydrophobicity is further increased; and

subjecting the agitated slurry containing said material to a mechanical method of dewatering.

2. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1 wherein said particulate material comprises particles of less than 2 mm in size.

3-9 (Cancelled).

10. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1 wherein the said mechanical method of dewatering is selected from the group consisting of: vacuum filtration, pressure filtration, centrifugal filtration, and centrifugation.

11. (Previously Presented)) The process of claim 1 wherein said nonionic surfactant is selected from the group consisting of: fatty acids, fatty esters, phosphate esters, hydrophobic polymers, ethers, glycol derivatives, sarcosine derivatives, silicon-based surfactants and polymers, sorbitan derivatives, sucrose and glucose esters and derivatives, lanolin-based derivatives, glycerol esters, ethoylated fatty esters, ethoxylated amines and amides, ethoxylated linear alcohols, ethoxylated tryglycerides, ethoylated vegetable oils, and ethoxylated fatty acids.

12. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 11 wherein said nonionic surfactant is blended with an oil of vegetable or animal origin.

13. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1 wherein said organic solvent includes a solvent selected from the group consisting of: light hydrocarbon oils and short-chain alcohols.

14-65 (Cancelled).

67. (Currently Amended) A process for dewatering a slurry of hydrophobic particulate material comprising:

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- i) initially increasing the hydrophobicity of said hydrophobic particulate material by adding hydrocarbon oil[[s]] to said slurry ~~increase the hydrophobicity of said hydrophobic particulate material;~~
- ii) adding a nonionic surfactant of hydrophile-lipophile balance (HLB) number less than 15 dissolved in at least one organic solvent;
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- iii) agitating said slurry to allow for said nonionic surfactant to adsorb on the surface of said material so that its hydrophobicity is further increased; and
- iv) subjecting the agitated slurry containing said material to a mechanical method of dewatering.

68. (Previously Presented) The process for claim 67 wherein said particulate material comprises particles of less than 2 mm in size.

69. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 67 wherein said nonionic surfactant is selected from the group consisting of: fatty acids, fatty esters, phosphate esters, hydrophobic polymers, ethers, glycol derivatives, sarcosine derivatives, silicon-based surfactants and polymers, sorbitan derivatives, sucrose and glucose esters and derivatives, lanolin-based derivatives, glycerol esters, ethoxylated fatty esters, ethoxylated amines and amides, ethoxylated linear alcohols, ethoxylated triglycerides, ethoxylated vegetable oils, and ethoxylated fatty acids.

70. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 67 wherein said nonionic surfactant is blended with an oil of vegetable or animal origin.

71. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 67 wherein said organic solvent includes a solvent selected from the group consisting of: light hydrocarbon oils and short-chain alcohols.

72. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 13, wherein said light hydrocarbon oils are selected from diesel oil, kerosene, gasoline, petroleum distillate, turpentine, naphthanic oils, and oils of vegetable or animal origin.

73. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 13, wherein said short-chain alcohols have carbon atom numbers less than eight.

74. (Cancelled).

75. (Currently Amended) A process for dewatering a slurry of hydrophilic particulate material comprising:

initially hydrophobizing said material using a surfactant;

adding a nonionic surfactant of HLB number less than 15 dissolved in at least one organic solvent;

agitating said slurry to allow for said nonionic surfactant to adsorb on the surface of said initially hydrophobized material so that its hydrophobicity is further increased; and

subjecting the agitated slurry containing said material to a mechanical method of

dewatering ~~The process of claim 1~~, wherein said hydrophilic particulate material is a sulfide mineral and the said surfactant that is used for the initial hydrophobization step is a thiol-type surfactant.

76. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 75, wherein said thiol-type surfactant is selected from thiols, xanthates, thiophosphates, thionocarbamates, xanthogen formats, and thiourea.

77. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 71, wherein said light hydrocarbon oils are selected from diesel oil, kerosene, gasoline, petroleum distillate, turpentine, naphthanic oils, and oils of vegetable or animal origins.

78. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 71, wherein said short-chain alcohols have carbon atom numbers less than eight.